

Maine Wildlife Action Plan Steering Committee  
January 8, 2015  
0900 - 1130  
MDIFW, Augusta

Present: Barry Burgason (MFPC), Judy Camuso (MDIFW), Phillip deMaynadier (MDIFW), Tom Doak (SWOAM), Molly Docherty (MNAP), Jeff Norment (NRCS), Amanda Shearin (MDIFW), Mark Stadler (MDIFW), Sally Stockwell (Maine Audubon), Charlie Todd (MDIFW), Barbara Vickery (TNC), and Nate Webb (MDIFW).

**Bold** = action item

~Welcome by Commissioner Woodcock

~Minutes of 12/16/2014 Meeting: Correct spelling of Barry's last name to Burgason.  
Minutes approved as noted.

~Additional members

Tribes: Sherri Venno is coordinating a meeting with Maine tribes to occur in February. Sherri will also talk with D.J. Monette, USFWS tribal liaison in the Northeast Region to discuss a process to integrate the tribes in to Maine's action plan update. She also plans to seek input from the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society. **Amanda** will stay in contact with Sherri. [Note: at the 12/16/2014 steering committee meeting Molly suggested that Maine's update should assess the contribution that tribal lands provide for the conservation of SGCN.]

DMR: MDIFW will be able to use SWG planning grant funds to provide financial support for Claire Enterline, DMR, to represent marine resources and coastal issues in the action plan update. **MDIFW** will invite Claire to also serve on the steering committee.

~Reporting on elements 1-3 / Phillip

MDIFW has posted the SGCN list, SGCN habitat associations, and stressors affecting SGCN and their habitats on the action plan website. This will provide partners and the public the opportunity to review the information. Phillip handed out examples of the draft reports for Katahdin Artic butterfly, New England Cottontail, and the alpine ecosystem macrogroup. Phillip explained that the reports – for individual SGCN and habitat macrogroups - integrate action plan elements 1-3 in a single, unique document. MDIFW is considering several mechanisms to prioritize stressors.

The committee expressed its satisfaction with the reports, and offered several recommendations to **MDIFW**.

- Provide a "users guide" with terms, definitions e.g., "actionability"
- Change "threats" to 'stressors' in the database reports
- Provide definitions of the threat characteristics
- Editorial review of the reports to ensure consistency of format and terminology
- Announce and describe the reports to the partners at the January meeting
- Send an email to partners informing them that the reports are available on the website.

~Agenda 01/20/2015 partner meeting // Maple Hill Farm, Hallowell

The steering committee discussed the objectives, format, and agenda for the 4<sup>th</sup> conservation partner meeting. The committee developed the agenda below. Each morning session will provide time for floor discussion.

- 9:00 Welcome
- 9:15 Overview of public outreach and communication, element 8
  - Stakeholders, targeted surveys, focus groups, and analysis.
- 10:15 Update on the process for identifying distribution of SGCN, element 1
- 10:45 Break
- 11:00 Overview of the threat assessment process and results, element 3
- 12:00 Lunch
- 1:00 Prioritization of SGCN habitats, element 2 [results of habitat prioritization options]
- 1:30 Break-out groups
  - Habitat prioritization: partner review and feedback
    - Coastal / marine
    - Wetlands
    - Freshwater / aquatics
    - Terrestrial
- 3:00 Break
- 3:15 Break-out group reports
- 3:45 Introduction to conservation actions, element 4
  - Options for organizing sub-committees to develop conservation actions
  - Process that sub-committees will use to develop conservation actions
- 4:15 Wrap-up thoughts, suggestions
  - Where are we in the process
  - Closing comments from the floor
  - Select date of next partner meeting – tentatively week of 02/09/2015
- 4:30 Adjourn

~Development of conservation actions, element 4 // Mark

At the December meeting, the committee asked MDIFW to prepare

1. An assessment / review of 2005 conservation actions to determine progress and success of previous conservation actions
2. A summary of Maine's on-going collaborative conservation actions
3. A list of possible conservation actions
4. A menu of approaches for the development of conservation actions that it could consider

1] Mark distributed *Maine's State Wildlife Action Plan: 10 Years of Enhanced Wildlife Conservation*, an MDIFW summary of projects accomplished with SWG funding since the award of Maine's first grant. He also provided the committee with an excerpt from Maine's 2005 action plan [Chapter 6.0, *Conservation Actions*, pages 3-11]. This document provides a summary of priority conservation actions identified in the 2005 plan. Based on the SWG summary report, Mark highlighted within Chapter 6.0 the 61 SGCN receiving conservation action.

The committee indicated that in the future **MDIFW** should develop a system to identify all work (not just funded by SWG) that addresses conservation actions. They noted that there are many things that partners accomplish that are not highlighted in the SWG program summary. **MDIFW**

should also review its survey and monitoring data for each SGCN to determine which require additional effort and which do not.

2] *Maine's State Wildlife Action Plan: 10 Years of Enhanced Wildlife Conservation* provides an overview of Maine's on-going collaborative conservation actions. [Note: In the 2005 action plan Chapter 9.0, *Coordination with Conservation Partners* provides an assessment of collaborative efforts.

3] Mark distributed "Examples of Possible Conservation Actions" a document highlighting ~120 potential conservation actions developed from notes taken by MDIFW staff at various national, regional, and Maine action plan meetings.

The committee requested that **MDIFW** provide its members with a digital version of the list for their review and comment. It also requested that **MDIFW** prepare a matrix of conservation actions by broad ecosystem group [terrestrial, aquatic/freshwater, wetland, and marine coastal]. **Mark** will prepare the matrix and forward to members via email.

4] MDIFW proposed that the 2015 conservation actions be developed by ecosystem sub-committees [terrestrial, aquatic/freshwater, wetland, and marine coastal] facilitated by MDIFW staff and interested / capable partners. The committee concurred, but also requested a fifth sub-committee considering broad, big picture conservation actions.

*Best Practices for State Wildlife Action Plans* and the *Northeast Lexicon* provide guidance for the development of conservation actions. Mark provided the committee with a written overview of the suggestions contained in these documents. In particular he presented conservation-planning information from the *Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation* and SMART.

The committee discussed both processes at length. It concluded that the Open Standards provides a coherent way to develop conservation actions; however, there are simpler approaches that achieve essentially the same result. It suggested that the starting point for generating conservation actions should be the information developed to meet the requirements of elements 1-3. The committee requested that **MDIFW** prepare a guidance document for the development of conservation actions to be used by the five sub-committees. The document will set the parameters for the development of conservation actions.

**MDIFW** and interested **steering committee** members will meet to discuss facilitation of sub-committees and the development of actions. **Mark** will schedule this meeting prior to the next steering committee meeting.

~Development of monitoring protocols / *Best Practices for State Wildlife Action Plans*, 3 levels of monitoring:

- Species and habitats,
- Effectiveness of conservation actions, and
- Implementation of adaptive management as necessary.

~Updates

February conservation partner meeting: the morning of 02/12/2015; half-day meeting in the Augusta area. **MDIFW** will explore options for Skype for those who can't attend.

Online posting of WAP information

- Sub-committee minutes to be posted shortly
- SGCN habitat associations and stressor assessment has been posted; MDIFW has yet to draft the “users guide.” **MDIFW** will develop by next partner meeting. Guide will facilitate partner and public review. The guide will have an introduction and it will address online navigation and definitions of terms. The committee suggested that the inclusion of screen shots would be beneficial.
- Maine habitat classification system, marine habitat associations are posted under draft documents
- **Mark** will notify partner that MDIFW has posted these materials.

#### Regional Conservation Opportunity Areas

Phillip, Andy Cutko, and Barbara participated in an RCOA conference call yesterday. The goal is to develop a methodology to identify RCOAs, not actually designate the RCOA polygons. The NE Landscape Conservation Cooperative will develop a lexicon on how states might develop RCOAs. It is also updating RSGCN list based on states 2015 action plan update. At this time there is little nexus with the 2015 Maine action plan.

#### Maine Land Conservation Conference

MDIFW awaiting notification from Maine Coast Heritage Trust

#### Spruce budworm display at partner meeting

Barry told the committee that his request was on-hold

~Wrap-up thoughts, suggestions

#### **Steering committee** assignments

Review list of possible conservation actions

~Next meeting: 02/05/2015. MDIFW, 0900-1130

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